

The Senior Project at the American School Foundation of Guadalajara

The Senior Project requires students to investigate a topic of interest to them and make connections between their interests and the real world. The project is based on the American School Foundation of Guadalajara's Learning Goals:

Our ASFG community strives to be...

1. Purposeful Learners

- Confident and motivated
- Self-directed and reflective
- Physically, socially, and emotionally well-balanced
- Academically and technologically literate

2. Effective Communicators

- Skilful speakers and writers
- Analytical readers, listeners, and viewers
- Receptive to diverse forms of communication
- Artistically expressive

3. Complex Thinkers

- Inquisitive, open-minded, and flexible
- Adept at applying learning to new situations in appropriate ways
- Creative problem solvers and responsible risk-takers
- Critical researchers

4. Community Contributors

- Respectful, responsible, honest, and kind
- Collaborative team members with positive inter-personal skills
- Constructive and pro-active leaders
- Global citizens committed to peace, diversity, and environmental responsibility.

PROJECT

Projects must demonstrate proficiency in at least three of the ASFG Learning Goals. The project must go beyond your current skills. Further, their project must be chosen from one of the following broad categories:

- **Career** – the project involves potential future employment
- **Personal Growth** – the project represents a unique personal challenge
- **Artistic** – the project involves the creation of a unique work of art, music, writing, dance, video, or other form of creative expression
- **Global** – the project involves working on a solution to a problem faced by the community, the country, or the planet

PAPER

Each student is required to write an eight to ten page research paper. The student selects his/her own paper topic, but there must be a clear relationship between the paper and the project. Instruction for the writing process and evaluation of the final paper takes place in the English classroom. The student is responsible for revising the paper as many times as necessary until he/she has successfully met all the requirements. The paper must have at least seven sources, of which four must not be Internet sources. One of the sources must be an interview that the student conducts with someone from outside the school.

PRESENTATION

There are two parts to the presentation:

- a presentation to the class, which must use visual aids but may **not** use PowerPoint, Flash, or any other computer presentation format. The presentation must be at least 10 minutes in length and will be evaluated by the teacher based on a specific rubric.
- a presentation to the ASFG Community on an evening in May. Parents and students will be invited. Students will set up a table at which they will present their final product.

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Your project must incorporate skills and knowledge you have acquired in courses other than English courses at ASFG: math, physics, chemistry, art, physical education, music drama, biology, computer science, social studies, mentoring. You may want to discuss your project with your teachers, and it is possible that you may receive credit for some of your work in another class, but your teachers will make that decision.

PRODUCT

You must produce something tangible, something that you can show to an audience or your peers, parents, and teachers in May.

You must also write two “real world” documents connected to your project. These could include business letters, advertising, portfolios, reviews, menus, proposals, and so on.

PROCESS

You will be meeting with your English teacher regularly to discuss your progress. You must meet deadlines. You must keep a log of the time you spent on this project (a minimum of 20 hours). You must write a journal entry every week in which you report on what you have accomplished and what you are planning to do next. As part of your journal, you need to provide evidence or proof of progress. This could include:

- a comprehensive set of pictures or videos of you working on the project
- audio tapes (of interviews)
- samples of materials or fabric
- drawings
- plans
- designs
- rough drafts
- receipts for materials

Some suggestions to get you thinking.

CATEGORY: Career.

Topic: Early Childhood Education.

Research Paper Thesis: Brain research indicates young children should not watch TV.

Product: Create packet of low-cost family alternatives to watching TV.

Interview: An early childhood teacher or administrator

Cross-curricular: Statistics (math), Mazlow's Hierarchy (psychology), Physical Activities as Alternatives to watching TV (physical education), Chemical changes in brain while watching TV (chemistry)

CATEGORY: Career

Topic: Managing a restaurant

Research Paper Thesis: Mexican restaurants should offer more vegetarian and low-fat options.

Product: Create a menu for a restaurant. You must include the prices, based on research into the cost of ingredients and labor. If you wish, you could also design the restaurant and your product could include blueprints or a drawing of the layout of the restaurant.

Interview: A manager of a restaurant.

Cross-curricular. The effects of food on humans (biology and chemistry) Cost of menu (math)

CATEGORY: Personal Growth

Topic: Meditation

Research Paper Thesis: In our increasingly stressful world, regular meditation provides physical and emotional benefits.

Product: Compose and record a meditation CD. The liner notes discuss the benefits and techniques of meditation.

Interview: A person who meditates regularly, a teacher of meditation techniques.

Cross-curricular: Brain-waves (psychology, biology), Music (music)

CATEGORY: Personal Growth.

Topic: Anger Management

Research Paper Thesis: Anger is the most destructive of human emotions.

Product: A guidebook to techniques of dealing with anger

Interview: A psychologist or counsellor.

Cross curricular: Physical effects of anger (biology, psychology), Positive ways of dealing with anger (physical education)

CATEGORY: Artistic

Topic: Sculpture

Research Paper Thesis: Sculpture has been replaced in our society by billboards and giant logos.

Product: A sculpture or a series of sculptures

Interview: A sculptor, a professor of art history

Cross-curricular: History of Sculpture (Art), Golden Mean and proportion (math)

CATEGORY: Artistic

Topic: Poetry

Research Paper Thesis: Poetry is both inspired by the spirit of its time and designed to change that spirit.

Interview: A poet, a professor or teacher of poetry

Product: A poetry anthology, containing your own poems and the poems of others.

Cross-Curricular: Design of cover and illustrations (art)

CATEGORY: Global

Topic: Lake Chapala

Research Paper Thesis: The solution to the problems of Lake Chapala is ...

Product: A proposal for the restoration of Lake Chapala

Interview: A politician, an environmentalist, a water expert.

Cross-curricular: The Science of Lake Life (biology, chemistry) Statistics (math

CATEGORY: Global

Topic: Combating poverty in Mexico

Research Paper Thesis: The most valid solution to poverty in Mexico is the creation of a micro-credit program.

Product: A proposal for the establishment of a micro-credit program funded by ASFG.

Interview: A politician, and economist, a banker

Cross-curricular: Economics, Statistics,